GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3151
ANSWERED ON:14.12.2005
AMENDMENTS IN VISA CONSULAR SERVICES
Panda Shri Prabodh

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has proposed to Pakistan regarding wide-ranging amendments in bilateral visa and consular services;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Pakistan has accepted this proposal;

(d) if so, whether any agreements are likely to be signed by the two countries in this regard;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the time by which these agreements are likely to be implemented?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED)

(a)-(f): In keeping with our policy of encouraging people to people contact between India and Pakistan, India presented a draft proposing amendments to the present India-Pakistan Visa Agreement during the visit of former EAM, Shri K. Natwar Singh to Pakistan from October 2 to 5, 2005. The draft envisages longer duration visit visas for people from both countries and proposes the addition of new categories of visas such as student, pilgrims and business visa to facilitate easier movement of people across the border. Both sides have agreed to pursue this matter under the Composite Dialogue framework. The third round of the India - Pakistan Composite Dialogue is scheduled to be held from January to July 2006.